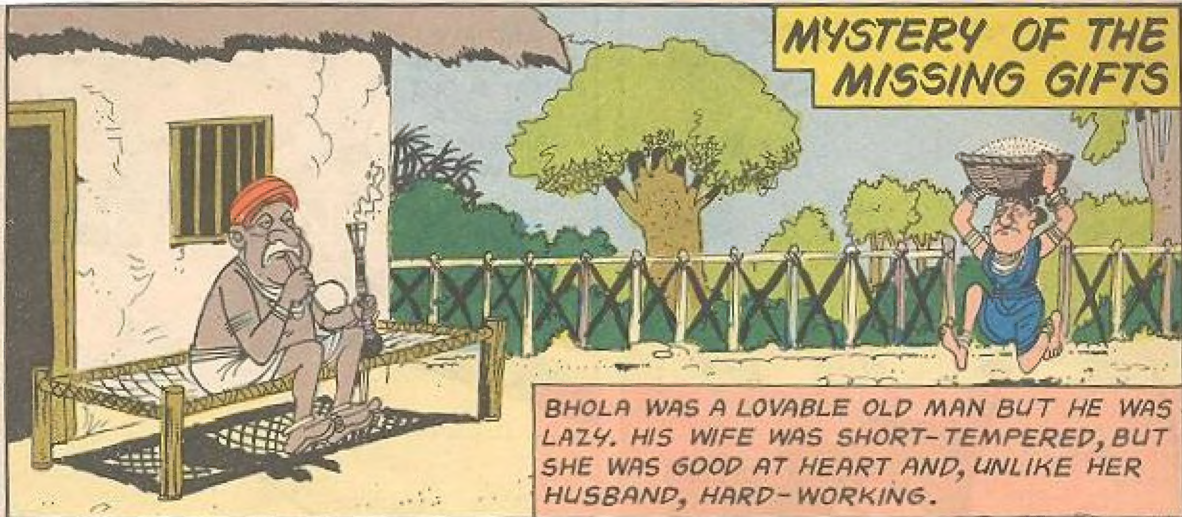


MYSTERY
OF THE MISSING GIFTS

A FOLKTALE FROM MADHYA PRADESH




MYSTERY OF THE MISSING GIFTS
BHOLA WAS A LOVABLE OLD MAN BUT HE WAS LAZY. HIS WIFE WAS SHORT-TEMPERED, BUT SHE WAS GOOD AT HEART AND, UNLIKE HER HUSBAND, HARD-WORKING.

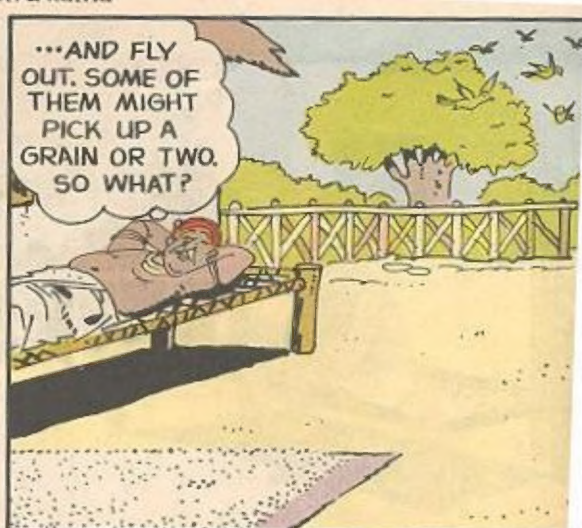

NIMMO, WHY DON'T YOU REST FOR A WHILE?
AND STARVE?


I'M LEAVING FOR THE FIELDS. WILL YOU KEEP AN EYE ON THIS RICE ···


··· AND SEE THAT THE SPARROWS DON'T GET AT IT?
YOU CAN TRUST ME, NIMMO. I'LL KEEP A CLOSE WATCH.


POOR NIMMO. SHE WORKS SO HARD.

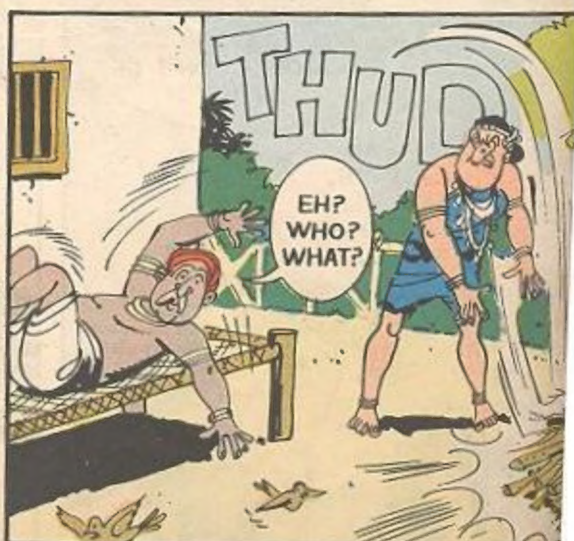

AND FOR NOTHING. NOW WHAT IS THE NEED TO WATCH THE SPARROWS? THEY FLY IN···


···AND FLY OUT. SOME OF THEM MIGHT PICK UP A GRAIN OR TWO. SO WHAT?


HO – HUM···


BZZ ZZ BR


NO!


THUD
EH? WHO? WHAT?


BHOLA!
I'M SORRY, NIMMO.


WHAT'S THE USE OF THAT? YOU'LL NEVER LEARN.


DON'T CRY, NIMMO. PLEASE DON'T.


I'LL GET YOU PLENTY OF RICE.
YOU'LL GET ME RICE! DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH.


TOMORROW, I'LL CATCH ALL THE SPARROWS AND SELL THEM IN THE BAZAAR...


...AND WITH THAT MONEY, I'LL BUY YOU ALL THE RICE IN THE WORLD.

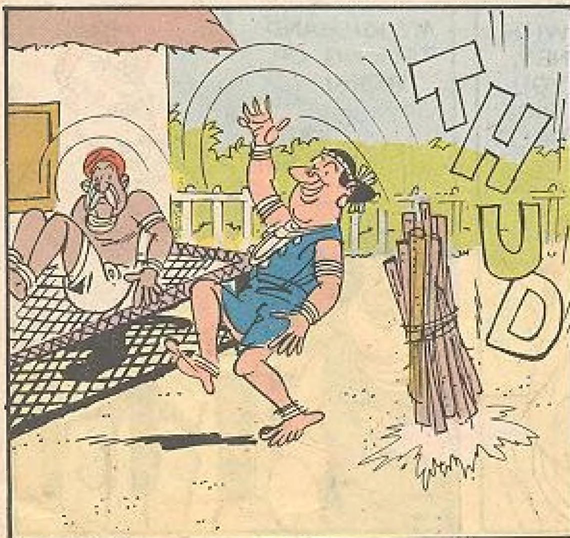

MY HUSBAND TALKING OF WORK!
WAIT AND SEE.


THE FOLLOWING MORNING BHOLA BOUGHT SOME BIRD-LIME. WHEN NIMMO HAD SPREAD OUT THE RICE ...


... HE SPREAD THE BIRD-LIME OVER IT.


LATER IN THE AFTERNOON—


HE HAS DONE IT! MY LAZY HUSBAND HAS DONE IT!!


THUD


BIRDS ... HAVE THEY CARRIED AWAY THE RICE AGAIN?


NO BHOLA! THEY ARE CAUGHT! SEE... ALL OF THEM. THEY SEEM TO BE STUCK.


COME, LET'S PICK UP THE BIRDS.


PLEASE, HAVE MERCY ON US AND SET US FREE.


I'LL REWARD YOU IF YOU DO.
REWARD?


WHAT REWARD CAN YOU GIVE US?
I AM THE KING OF THE SPARROWS. IF YOU SET US FREE AND COME TO MY HOUSE TOMORROW, I'LL GIVE YOU A REWARD.


ALL RIGHT. I'LL SET YOU FREE IN A MOMENT.


BHOLA SET ALL THE BIRDS FREE.
THANK YOU, FRIENDS.


BHOLA, YOU MUST GET UP EARLY IN THE MORNING AND GO TO HIS HOUSE TO COLLECT THE REWARD.


THE NEXT MORNING—
BRING BACK SOMETHING USEFUL.
OF COURSE!


DON'T LEAVE THE GIFT ANYWHERE ON THE WAY...


...AND DON'T FALL ASLEEP.

ON THE WAY BHOLA PASSED BY HIS DAUGHTER'S HOUSE.

FATHER, WHY DON'T YOU COME IN AND HAVE SOME RICE GRUEL?

NOT NOW, DEAR. I HAVE WORK TO DO.

MY FATHER TALKING OF WORK! WELL, WELL!

YES. I MUST ASK FOR A USEFUL REWARD. BUT WHAT SHALL I...

OH! WHAT A LARGE HERD OF CATTLE! IF I HAD JUST ONE COW...

WHY DON'T YOU ASK OUR KING FOR ONE?


BHOLA LOOKED UP—
DOES THIS HERD BELONG TO HIM? HE WILL GIVE ME ONE IF I ASK FOR IT.
THEN ASK FOR SONAR BARSA.


SONAR BARSA··· SONAR BARSA··· SONAR ···


IT IS NOON. I WONDER HOW MUCH FARTHER···
NO FARTHER, MY FRIEND.


WELCOME MY FRIEND.
IT'S YOU!


WHAT REWARD WOULD YOU LIKE?


I WANT SONAR BARSA.
IS THAT ALL? I'LL HAVE HER BROUGHT TO YOU.

A SHORT WHILE LATER—

HERE YOU ARE! HER DUNG TURNS INTO GOLD THE MOMENT IT TOUCHES THE GROUND.

NIMMO WILL NEVER HAVE TO WORK AGAIN. THANK YOU, MY FRIEND.

SO BHOLA LEFT FOR HOME.

ON THE WAY—

GOLD!

BHOLA BENT DOWN TO PICK THE GOLD.

WHEN HE STOOD UP—

SHE'S DROPPING GOLD ALL THE WAY!

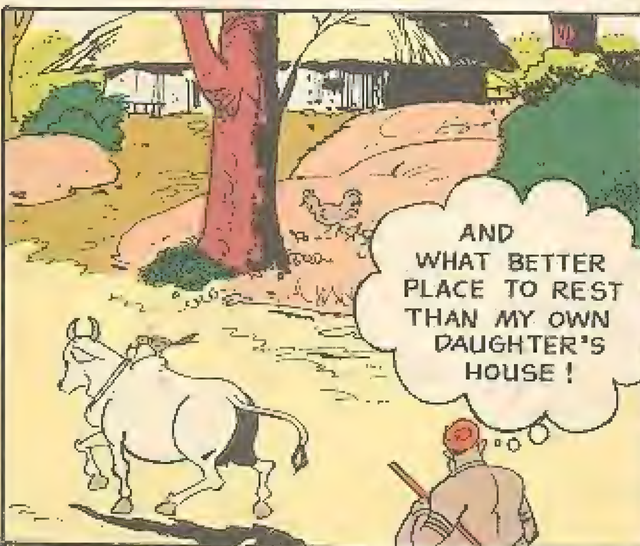

BHOLA RAN AFTER THE COW...


...BENT TO PICK UP THE GOLD...


...STOOD UP...


...AND RAN AFTER THE COW, TO COLLECT MORE GOLD.


SOON HE WAS TIRED.
I MUST REST FOR A WHILE. I'VE WORKED HARD ENOUGH.


AND WHAT BETTER PLACE TO REST THAN MY OWN DAUGHTER'S HOUSE!


JUST THEN —
SO FATHER, YOU HAVE RETURNED.
YES, DEAR, WITH A WONDERFUL COW.

THE DAUGHTER SMILED.

WHAT'S WONDERFUL ABOUT IT, FATHER? DOES IT DROP GOLDEN DUNG?

THAT WAS PRECISELY WHAT THE COW DID AT THAT VERY MOMENT.

NOW DO YOU SEE HOW VALUABLE A GIFT IT IS?

FROM WHOM, FATHER?

THEN BHOLA TOLD HER ALL ABOUT THE SPARROW KING.

IF I TAKE THIS COW, FATHER CAN ALWAYS GET ANOTHER LIKE IT.

FATHER, YOU MUST HAVE DINNER WITH US.

HAVE I EVER SAID NO TO SUCH AN OFFER?

LATER —

AH! THAT WAS A WONDERFUL MEAL. I FEEL SO DROWSY.

FATHER, WHY DON'T YOU SPEND THE NIGHT WITH US? YOU COULD LEAVE EARLY IN THE MORNING.

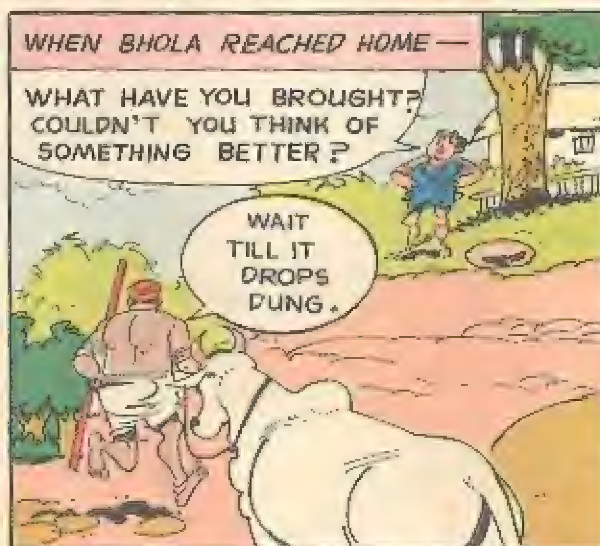

THAT NIGHT WHILE THE INNOCENT BHOLA SLEPT...


...HIS DAUGHTER LED SONAR BARSA TO HER OWN COWSHED.

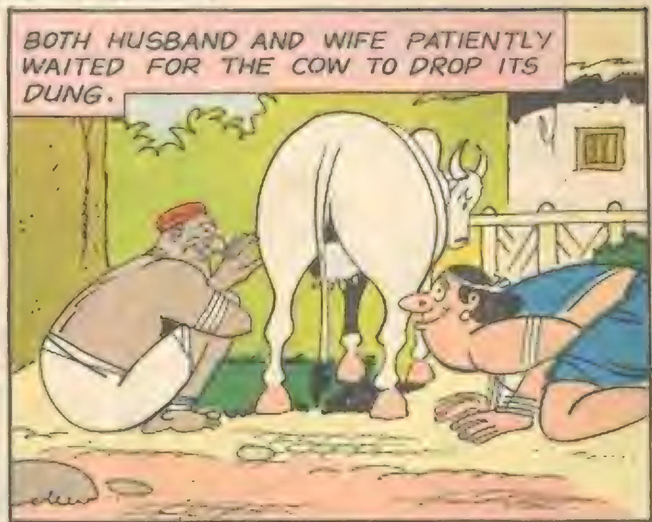

THE FOLLOWING MORNING —
I AM LEAVING NOW. HERE, TAKE ALL THIS GOLD.


AFTER ALL WE WILL GET SOME EVERY TIME THE COW DROPS DUNG.
THANK YOU, FATHER.


DO COME AGAIN.


WHEN BHOLA REACHED HOME —
WHAT HAVE YOU BROUGHT? COULDN'T YOU THINK OF SOMETHING BETTER?
WAIT TILL IT DROPS DUNG.

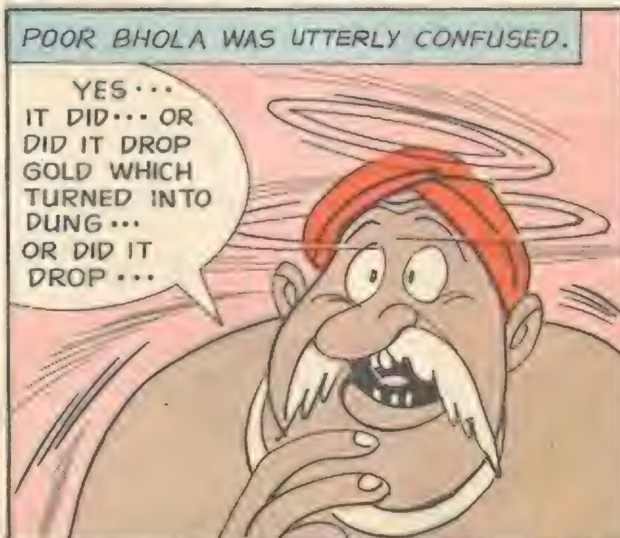

IT DROPS GOLDEN DUNG.
REALLY! PLEASE PARDON ME FOR MY HARSH WORDS.


BOTH HUSBAND AND WIFE PATIENTLY WAITED FOR THE COW TO DROP ITS DUNG.


AT LAST—
WATCH NOW···!


?


YOU FOOL. WHAT HAVE YOU BROUGHT HOME? A COW WHICH DROPS GOLDEN DUNG, DID YOU SAY?


POOR BHOLA WAS UTTERLY CONFUSED.
YES··· IT DID··· OR DID IT DROP GOLD WHICH TURNED INTO DUNG··· OR DID IT DROP···


YOU'D BETTER GO TO THE SPARROW-KING AND ASK FOR ANOTHER GIFT.
ALL RIGHT ... ALL RIGHT.


SO BHOLA WENT BACK TO THE SPARROW-KING.
YOU ARE A FINE FELLOW, CHEATING FRIENDS LIKE ME!
WHY, WHAT HAPPENED?

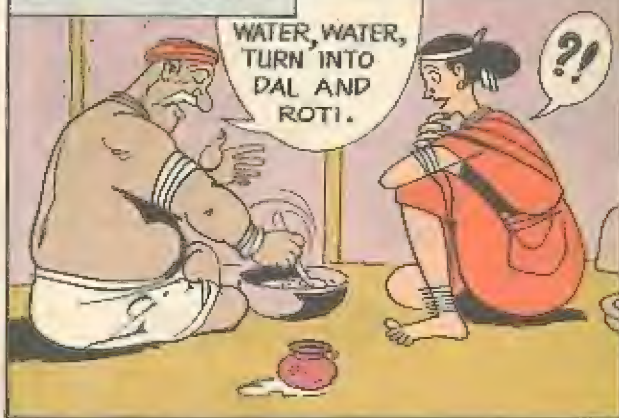

WHEN BHOLA TOLD HIM, THE SPARROW GAVE HIM ANOTHER GIFT, A POT AND A SPOON.
PUT WATER INTO THIS POT AND STIR IT WITH THIS SPOON.


THE WATER WILL TURN INTO ANYTHING YOU WANT TO EAT!
ANYTHING I WANT TO EAT!


BHOLA SET OUT FOR HOME. ON THE WAY HE STOPPED AT HIS DAUGHTER'S HOUSE TO SPEND THE NIGHT.
FATHER, LET ME COOK FOR YOU.
MY DEAR, I'LL COOK FOR YOU.


YOU!
YES I. WHAT WILL YOU HAVE?


THE DAUGHTER TOOK IT AS A JOKE.
I'LL HAVE··· DAL···ROTI···
ALL RIGHT. BRING SOME WATER.


THE WATER WAS BROUGHT. BHOLA PUT IT INTO THE POT AND STIRRED IT WITH THE SPOON.
WATER, WATER, TURN INTO DAL AND ROTI.
?!


AND LO!
YOUR DINNER IS READY.
THAT MAGIC POT AND SPOON WILL SOLVE ALL MY PROBLEMS.


THAT NIGHT, WHILE BHOLA SLEPT, HIS DAUGHTER TOOK THE MAGIC UTENSILS AND REPLACED THEM WITH ORDINARY ONES.


THE NEXT DAY WHEN BHOLA REACHED HOME, HE TOLD NIMMO ALL ABOUT THE POT.
NOW COOK ME SOME DAL AND ROTI. I'M TERRIBLY HUNGRY.
I'LL BRING WATER AT ONCE.


NIMMO BEGAN TO COOK.
O WATER, TURN INTO DAL AND ROTI.

NIMMO LOOKED INTO THE POT.

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? I'M HUNGRY.

HERE IS YOUR LUNCH.

SO POOR BHOLA WENT BACK TO THE SPARROW-KING AND TOLD HIM HIS TALE OF WOE.

MY FRIEND, SOMEONE IS PLAYING TRICKS ON YOU.

THE SPARROW-KING ASKED FOR A GOLDEN ROPE AND A STICK TO BE BROUGHT.

HERE. TAKE THESE AND GO HOME. THESE SHOULD HELP YOU RETRIEVE THE OTHER TWO GIFTS.

WHEN HE STOPPED AT HIS DAUGHTER'S HOUSE THAT NIGHT—

FATHER DIDN'T TELL ME ANYTHING ABOUT THE NEW GIFT. IT MUST BE VERY PRECIOUS.

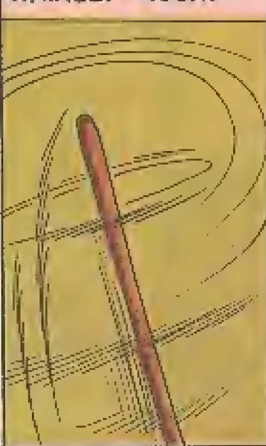
I'LL TAKE IT AWAY BEFORE HE WAKES UP.


THE MOMENT SHE TOUCHED THE GOLDEN ROPE HOWEVER...


...IT COILED ITSELF AROUND HER.
HEY!


BUT MORE WAS TO FOLLOW. THE STICK FLEW UP IN THE AIR...


...AND CAME DOWN ON HER HEAD.
OW-W-W!


IT WENT UP, WHIRLED ROUND...


...AND CAME DOWN ON HER BACK.


WHEN IT WENT UP AGAIN—
FATHER!
BZZ...
BZZ...


JUST AS THE ROD GAVE HIS DAUGHTER YET ANOTHER RESOUNDING WHACK—
FATHER! CALL OFF THE STICK!
EH..
EH..?


I DON'T UNDERSTAND! WHY HAVE YOU COILED THAT ROPE AROUND YOU?
FATHER! IT'S COMING DOWN AGAIN!

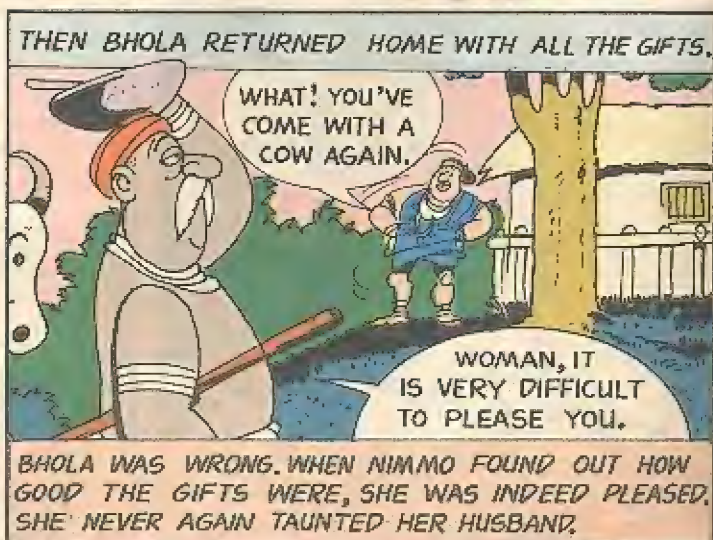

FATHER! CALL IT OFF. I'LL RETURN ALL THE GIFTS I STOLE!


THE NEXT MOMENT—

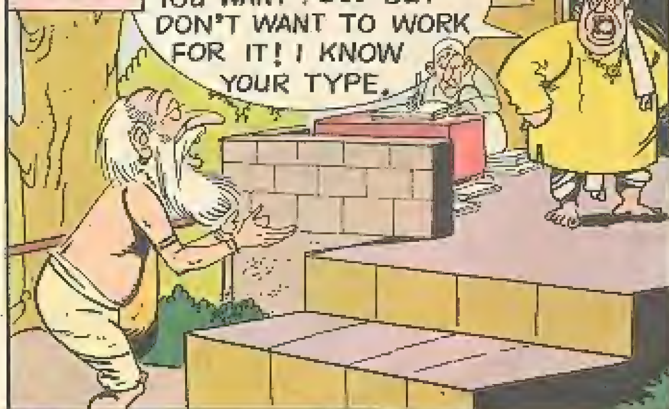

WHAT GIFTS? YOU MEAN···
FATHER, I'VE LEARNT MY LESSON. I'LL RETURN THE GIFTS.


O FATHER, YOU ARE SO INNOCENT. I'M ASHAMED OF MYSELF.


WHEN THE DAUGHTER CONFESSED TO HER DEEDS—
YES, A SOUND BEATING ONCE IN A WAY DOES SOME GOOD.

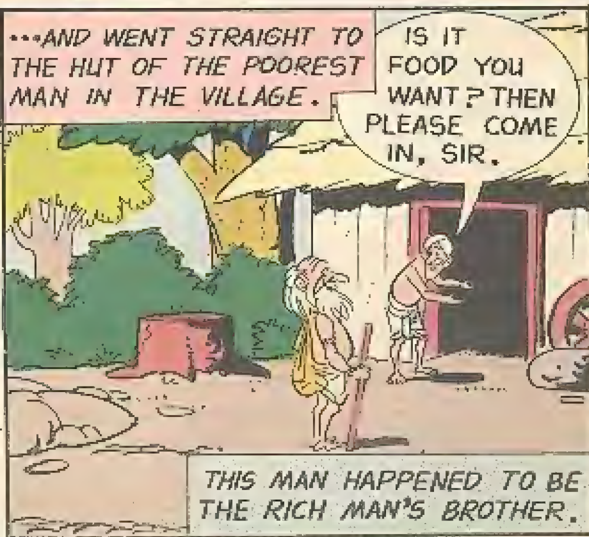

THEN BHOLA RETURNED HOME WITH ALL THE GIFTS.
WHAT! YOU'VE COME WITH A COW AGAIN.
WOMAN, IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO PLEASE YOU.
BHOLA WAS WRONG. WHEN NIMMO FOUND OUT HOW GOOD THE GIFTS WERE, SHE WAS INDEED PLEASED. SHE NEVER AGAIN TAUNTED HER HUSBAND.


THE SOUND OF MUSIC
A WANDERING SANYASI ONCE CAME TO THE VILLAGE OF RAGIHALLI.


WHEN HE STOPPED AT THE HOUSE OF THE RICHEST MAN IN THE VILLAGE TO BEG FOR ALMS —
YOU WANT FOOD BUT DON'T WANT TO WORK FOR IT! I KNOW YOUR TYPE.


GET OUT!


THE SANYASI LEFT WITHOUT UTTERING A WORD...


...AND WENT STRAIGHT TO THE HUT OF THE POOREST MAN IN THE VILLAGE.
IS IT FOOD YOU WANT? THEN PLEASE COME IN, SIR.
THIS MAN HAPPENED TO BE THE RICH MAN'S BROTHER.







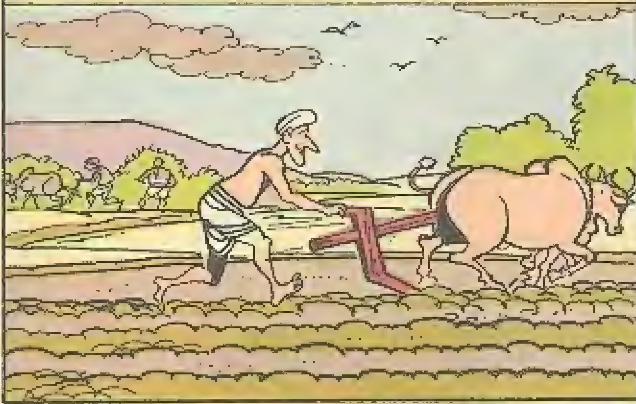






* ANNA MEANS ELDER BROTHER IN KANNADA.

WHEN IT WAS TIME TO SOW, ALL THE FARMERS GOT BUSY IN THEIR FIELDS. SO DID BADA TAMMA. HE PLOUGHED HIS FIELD...



...AND SOWED THE SEEDS.



THEN, DAY AFTER DAY, HE SAT IN THE FIELD AND PLAYED THE FLUTE FROM DAWN TO DUSK.



ONE DAY HIS BROTHER HAPPENED TO PASS BY.

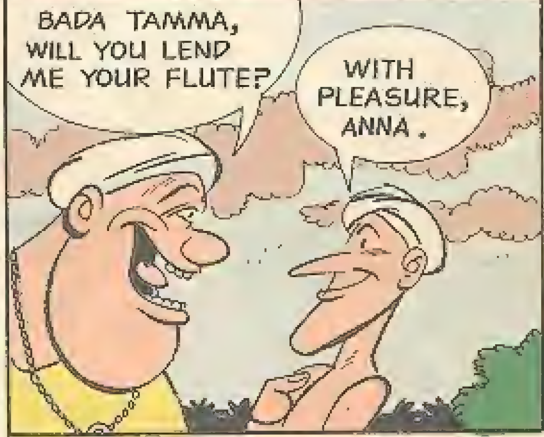




BUT THE RICH BROTHER WAS IN FOR A SURPRISE. A FEW DAYS LATER WHEN HE CAME THAT WAY AGAIN—



WHEN BADA TAMMA TOLD HIM ABOUT THE MAGICAL POWER OF THE FLUTE—



A FEW DAYS LATER—

HEY!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WHERE ARE YOU TAKING MY PADDY?

TO YOUR BROTHER'S HOUSE. REMEMBER YOUR PROMISE? NINE-TENTHS OF YOUR HARVEST WOULD GO TO HIM.

THAT HEAP— ONE-TENTH OF WHAT YOU GREW— IS YOURS.

ALL RIGHT! I WILL SOW MY SHARE AND RAISE ANOTHER CROP WITH THE HELP OF MY FLUTE ··· AH! MY FLUTE!

BADA TAMMA WENT TO HIS BROTHER'S HOUSE.

ANNA, PLEASE GIVE ME MY FLUTE. I NEED IT.

ALL RIGHT. WAIT HERE. I'LL BRING IT TO YOU.

HERE YOU ARE! AND DON'T COME TO ME AGAIN FOR FLUTE OR PADDY.
I WON'T, ANNA. I WON'T TROUBLE YOU AT ALL.

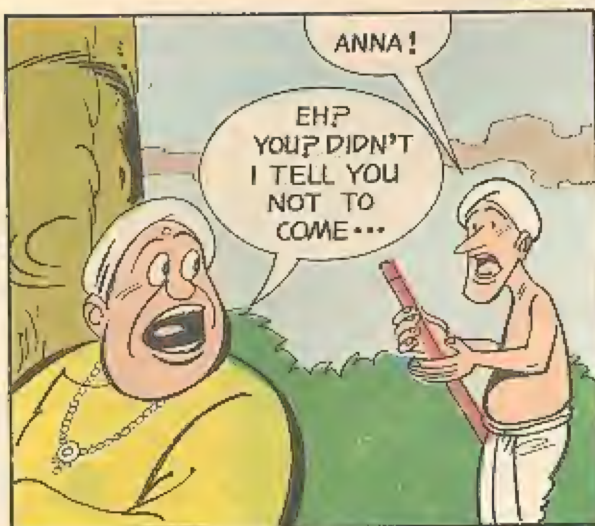










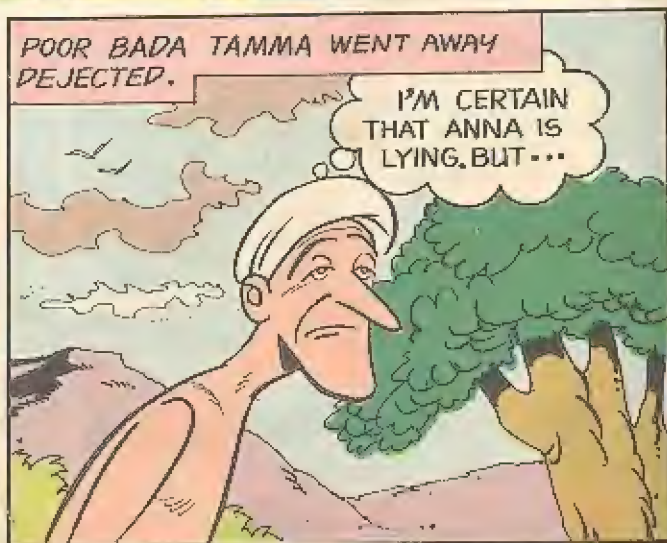

ANNA!
EH? YOU? DIDN'T I TELL YOU NOT TO COME...


ANNA, YOU HAVE GIVEN ME ANOTHER FLUTE BY MISTAKE.


PLEASE GIVE ME THE ONE I LENT YOU.

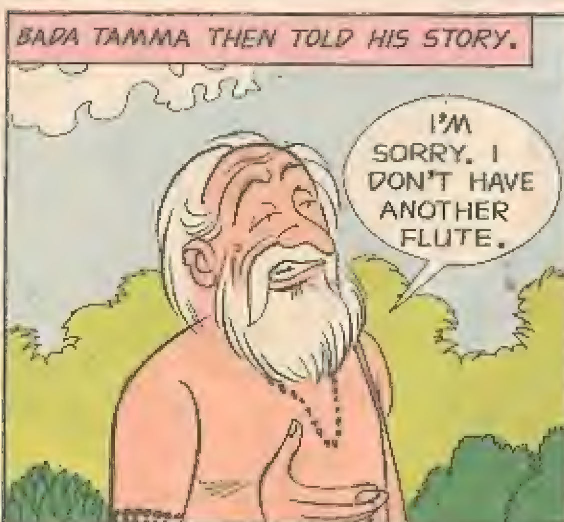

THAT IS THE FLUTE YOU LENT ME!
BUT ANNA...


AWAY WITH YOU, BEFORE I...


POOR BADA TAMMA WENT AWAY DEJECTED.
I'M CERTAIN THAT ANNA IS LYING. BUT...

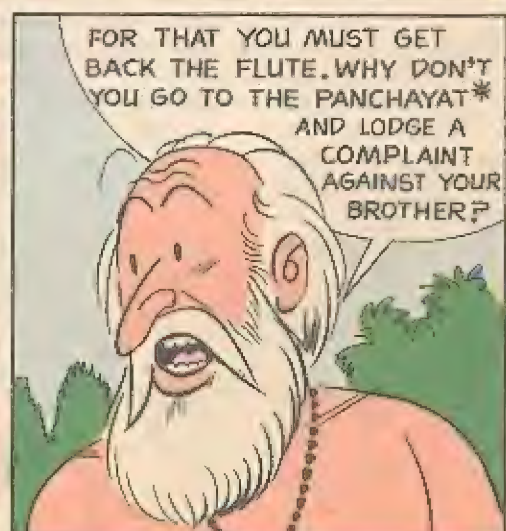












* VILLAGE COURT





TO HEAR BADA TAMMA'S COMPLAINT, THE PANCHAYAT MET UNDER A BANYAN TREE.



BADA TAMMA TOLD HIS TALE OF WOE. THEN—





AS YOU ALL KNOW, I DON'T NEED A FLUTE TO RAISE CROPS AND BECOME RICH. I HAVE PLENTY OF MONEY.

HE IS RIGHT. WHY SHOULD A RICH MAN LIKE HIM DUPE ANYONE?

BUT••• BUT•••

BE QUIET, YOU ROGUE.

MY BROTHER IS JEALOUS OF ME. THAT'S WHY HE HAS BROUGHT THIS FALSE CHARGE AGAINST ME.

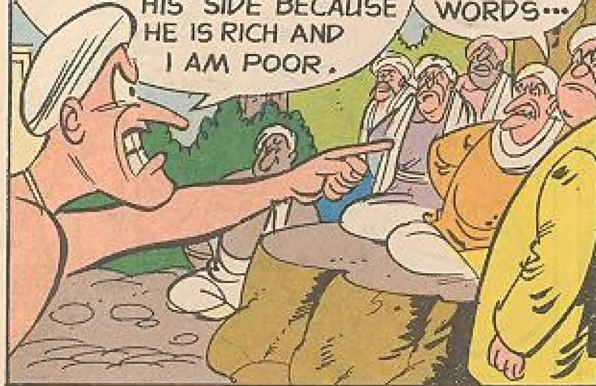
YES••• YES, JEALOUSY IS THE MOTHER OF ALL EVIL.

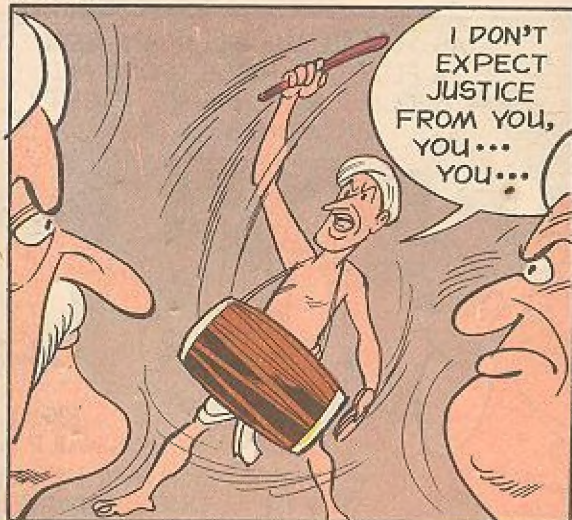
I AM ASHAMED OF YOU. IF GRAIN IS WHAT YOU WANT, I CAN GIVE YOU ALL YOU NEED AND MORE.

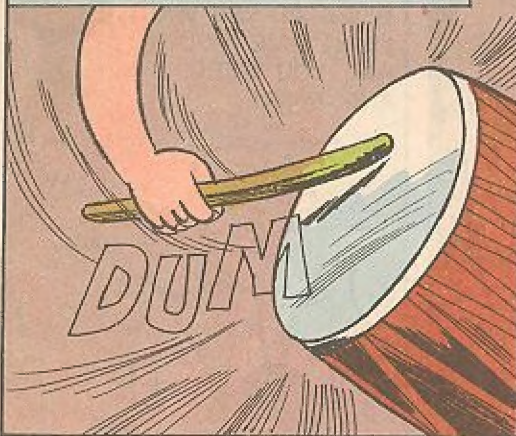
SEE HOW GENEROUS HE IS!

BADA TAMMA IS AN UNGRATEFUL WRETCH!

YOU SHALL BE FINED FOR BRINGING A FALSE COMPLAINT AGAINST A RESPECTABLE MAN, A MAN OF HONOUR•••


BADA TAMMA SHOOK WITH ANGER.
NO! HE IS NOT AN HONEST MAN. ALL OF YOU ARE ON HIS SIDE BECAUSE HE IS RICH AND I AM POOR.
WATCH YOUR WORDS...

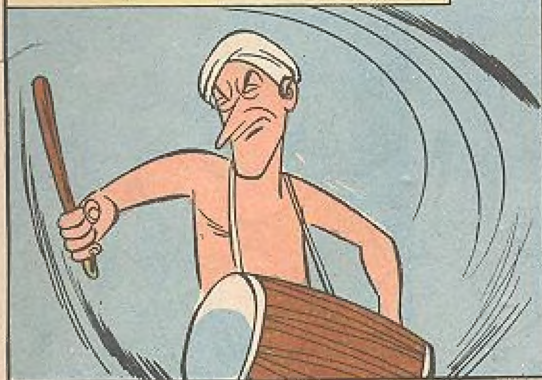

I DON'T EXPECT JUSTICE FROM YOU, YOU... YOU...


AND BADA TAMMA BROUGHT THE STICK DOWN ON THE DRUM.
DUM


THE NEXT MINUTE, ALL THE ELDERS WERE PULLED TO THEIR FEET.
DUM


DAMATAKA
AS BADA TAMMA BEGAN TO BEAT THE DRUM...


...THEIR FEET BEGAN TO KEEP TIME.


BADA TAMMA WAS NOT EVEN AWARE OF THEIR PLIGHT. HE KEPT ON BEATING THE DRUM. THE FASTER HE BEAT, THE FASTER THEIR FEET WORKED.


NO! NO! MY JOINTS.
OH MY BACK!

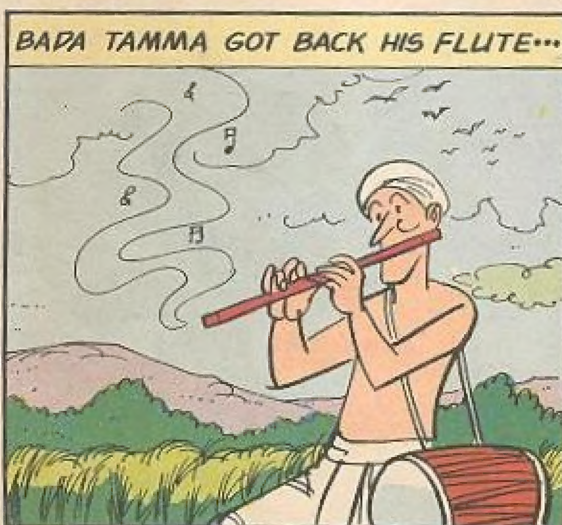

THEY TRIED TO SIT...


...BUT WERE JERKED TO THEIR FEET AGAIN...

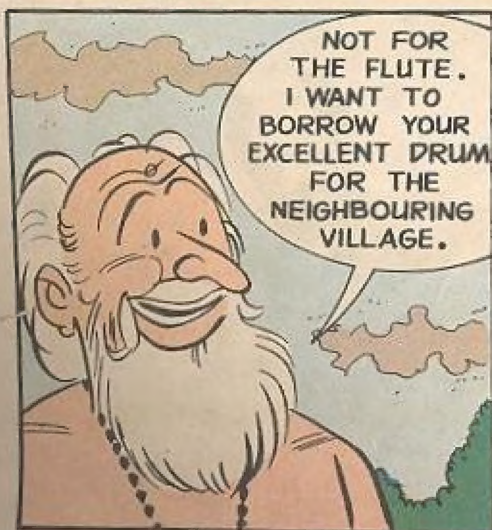

...AND WERE FORCED TO DANCE TO THE BEAT OF THE DRUM.
OH BADA TAMMA! PLEASE STOP.
I ADMIT MY GUILT! STOP.

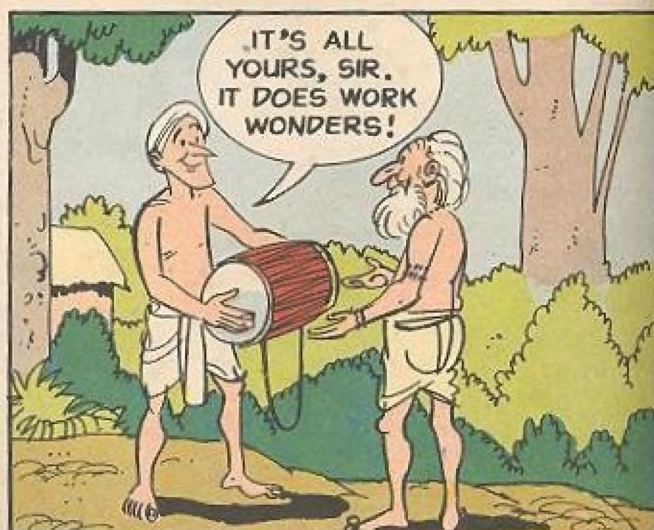

I WILL RETURN YOUR FLUTE. STOP BEATING THE DRUM, PLEASE!


SUDDENLY, BADA TAMMA STOPPED.
OH GOD! WHAT A RELIEF!
AT LAST HE HAS STOPPED.


BADA TAMMA GOT BACK HIS FLUTE...


...AND RAISED FRESH CROPS.
WELL, FRIEND, I AM BACK...
...FOR THE FLUTE?


NOT FOR THE FLUTE. I WANT TO BORROW YOUR EXCELLENT DRUM FOR THE NEIGHBOURING VILLAGE.


IT'S ALL YOURS, SIR. IT DOES WORK WONDERS!

February 1, 1982
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What are Dipy's jams made of?

Strawberries from Panchgani. Mangoes from Ratnagiri. Allahabad guavas. Trichur pineapples. Papayas from Dahanu and Jalgaon bananas. All picked for the sun-blessed goodness of Dipy's Mixed Fruit Jam.

When it's Dipy's, it's got to be the best.

Dipy's Jams: Apricot, Mango, Mixed Fruit, Pineapple, Raspberry, Strawberry, Orange Marmalade and Guava Jelly.

Dipy's jams — a fruit-full experience.

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